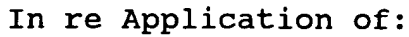


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: Examiner: R. Covington

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RESPONSE

Applicants respond to the Office Action dated October 16, 1998 as follows:

Claims 1-41 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as anticipated by Lesieur (EPO 708,099) and North (WO 95/17405). In support of the first rejection, the Examiner states that Lesieur teaches the claimed compounds at page 3, where A is ~~O~~A. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Initially, Applicants respectfully wish to point out that Lesieur was not published until April 24, 1996, whereas the present application is entitled to priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120 of various U.S. provisional and Japanese patent applications including, for example, Japanese